

BRIDGWATER

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE THIRTY-FIRST

Annual Report

OF

The Medical Officer of Health :—

WILBERFORCE THOMPSON

AND

The Inspector of Nuisances :—

RICHARD POPHAM.

FOR THE YEAR, 1913.

BRIDGWATER :

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Medical Officer's Report.

For the Year, 1913.

To the

Chairman and Members of the Bridgwater Rural District Council
Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure of submitting to you my Report for the year 1913, and of laying before you the usual tables of vital statistics.

The District covers an area of 85,076 acres, with a population of 18,203, and is divided into a Western Division and an Eastern Division by the River Parrett. The Western Division slopes from the Quantock Hills to the Bristol Channel and the River Parrett, the character of the soil being red sandstone and clay marle. The Eastern Division is to a great extent level country, the character of the soil being clay land and marsh land, except the portion formed by the Polden Hills which is blue lias.

The occupation of the inhabitants is chiefly agricultural, and there are no trades which have an injurious effect on the public health. The house accommodation of the working classes is on the whole good, and there are sufficient houses in most of the villages for the needs of the population with a sufficiency of space about the houses, and general cleanliness is maintained. Supervision is exercised over the building of new houses which are erected under the modern Bye-laws of the L.G.B. as adopted by the Council.

Plans have been passed during the year for 8 new Buildings. All of these have been erected in accordance with the Bye-laws enforced within the District.

Housing. Number of Houses in the District according to the Census of 1911. Occupied 4,373. Unoccupied 366.

Number of Houses inspected under the
Housing Act of 1909. ... 119

Result of inspection of Houses during 1913, classified as follows:—

(a)	Number reported unfit for Habitation	1
(b).	Number defective, but with defects, not sufficient to report as unfit for Habitation	67
(c).	Number without recorded defects	51

Action taken and results in regard to houses reported as unfit during 1912 and 1913 as follows:—

		1912	1913
(a).	Number reported	15	1
(b).	Closing Order made	10	1
(c).	Made fit without Closing Order	1	0
(d).	Still unfit but no Closing Order made	0	0
(e).	Demolished	2	0
(f).	Put in repair after Closing Order	6	0
(g).	Still closed at end of 1913	6	1

Action taken with regard to defective houses but not sufficient to report as unfit as follows:—

		For Houses first examined during	
		1912	1913.
Number so examined	...	176	67
Number with defects remedied by the end of 1913	...	176	42
Number still defective at the end of 1913	...	0	25

Number not yet visited to ascertain if	1912	1913.
defects are remedied	0	25

The general character of the defects found to exist were :—

Absence of or defective gutters and down pipes	48
Unclean Houses and necessity for Lime	
Washing	17
Foul Privies and defective Water Closets	12
Defective Drains	3
Defective Paving	6
Leaking Roofs	1
Unsafe Roofs	2
Unwholesome Water	3
Damp Walls	1
Defective Ceilings	3
Defective Floors	12
Windows made to open	3
Dangerous Chimneys	3

At Bason Bridge, Huntspill, the question of providing Houses is at the present time under the consideration of the Council. Arising out of a request for Houses at North Newton an inspection of the village was made. Subsequently the matter was allowed to stand over.

The **Water Supply** of the District is from :—

1. The Council's Water Supply.
2. The Bridgwater Town Council's Water Supply.
3. From Wells.

The Council's Water is supplied to the parishes of North Petherton, Chedzoy, Puriton, Bawdrip, Pawlett, Huntspill, Cossington, Middlezoy, Parts of Chilton Polden, Othery and Westonzoyland.

The schemes passed during 1912 for supplying the Village of Woolavington and for extending the Water Supply in the Parishes of Bridgwater Without, Chilton Trinity, North Pether-ton, Westonzoyland and Puriton were all completed.

The Bridgwater Town Council's Water is supplied to Bridgwater Without, Wembdon and Cannington.

Nether Stowey has its own water supply consisting of a Reservoir on the Quantock Hills from which the water is supplied to the Village by gravitation. The water supply of the remaining portion is from private wells except a small supply to some 24 houses at Thurloxtan on Lord Portman's Estate. The same conditions obtain at Goathurst, where a supply from the Tynte Estate is available.

The Council's Water Supply is in a very satisfactory condition, and has proved a valuable undertaking for the District. The average daily amount used is about 86,000 gallons. The supply varied considerably during the year, the lowest quantity during September being 200,000 gallons daily, The highest in January 530,000 gallons daily. Further works are being undertaken at Willoughby in order to utilize other springs which have been found on the estate.

This water takes its rise on the Quantock Hills from deep springs, and is distributed by gravitation, it is of excellent quality and free from any risk of pollution, being conveyed in pipes from its source. The supply is constant.

A scheme is now under consideration for supplying the Village of Othery with this water.

The amount of rainfall measured at Chilton Polden during the year 1913 was 30·65 inches. During the previous six years the amounts measured were :—1907, 29·61. 1908, 23·06. 1909, 26·37. 1910, 38·09. 1911, 25·30. 1912, 40·76.

The highest temperature recorded was 82° on June 16th. The lowest 24° on February 21st and December 20th.

Rainfall during each month in inches.			Number of Days on which rain fell.	
January	...	5.72	...	24
February	...	.66	...	13
March	...	3.00	...	21
April	...	2.37	...	19
May	...	2.84	...	17
June	...	1.29	...	12
July	...	.60	...	9
August	...	1.64	...	8
September	...	3.14	...	14
October	...	3.84	...	15
November	...	2.89	...	21
December	...	2.66	...	14
30.65			...	187

Milk Supply. Many of the Farms in this district are dairy farms, cheese-making and butter-making accounting for a considerable portion of the milk, but a large portion is exported to the larger towns. The milk produced is of good quality and wholesome. The dairies are as a rule clean, well lighted and ventilated, and every endeavour is made by the dairyman to keep them in a wholesome condition. On some of the farms the Cow-Sheds are small and defective and little attention is paid to lime-washing and the removal of manure. No action has been taken by the Council in causing dairy cattle to be examined by a veterinary surgeon.

The number of persons entered on the register is 108. The number of Cow-Keepers on the register is 61, but the register is far from complete.

Slaughter-Houses are kept in good condition and regularly lime-washed. There are 22 licensed Slaughter-houses and 13 registered. All of these have been inspected.

Action under the Sale of Food and Drugs' Act is carried out by the Police, During the year 48 samples have been taken and submitted to analysis. All were found unadulterated.

No action has been taken under Section 117, P.H.A., 1875.

No carcasses or parts of carcasses have been condemned for tuberculosis.

Sewerage and Drainage is on the whole satisfactory. In the larger villages the sewage is received into settling-tanks which are emptied as occasion requires. Extensions of sewers are being made every year.

At Chilton Polden a new main sewer has been laid.

Plans have been passed for laying a 9 inch sewer 225 yards long at Bason Bridge.

At North Petherton two detritus tanks and two 50 ft. percolating filters have been constructed to more adequately deal with the sewage of this village. These are working well and giving every satisfaction.

Excrement Disposal. Where villages are sewered the excrement is disposed of as above described. In other places earth-closets, cess-pits and privies are utilised. House refuse is disposed of by the occupier, no public scavenging being in vogue.

Nuisances. On the occurrence of any nuisance a notice is served on the responsible person to have the matter abated, as a rule this is at once attended to. There are no nuisances unabated.

The Bye-Laws in force are Cleansing of Footways and Removal of refuse, Prevention of Nuisances, Common Lodging-Houses, Houses let in Lodgings, New Streets and Buildings, Slaughter-houses, Cemeteries and offensive Trades.

There are no Lodging-houses or Houses let in Lodgings, and only one offensive Trade.

No Local Government Board inquiries have been held during the year.

The following Acts have not been adopted.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.

” ” ” 1907.

Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890.

Notification of Births Act, 1907.

The Sanitary Condition of the Public Elementary Schools is satisfactory and the Water Supply good. The School Teachers report any cases of supposed infectious disease, and the child is visited by myself at home and a notice sent to the school Teacher to exclude the scholar when necessary. A further notice is sent to the Teacher when the scholar is free from infection.

The arrangements for the medical inspection of school children are carried out by the County Medical Officer of Health.

The following Schools were closed owing to Measles:—Somerset Bridge, Wembdon, West Huntspill, Puriton, Cannington, Bawdrip and Aisholt.

Factories and Workshops. There are 116 Factories and Workshops (that is including all small businesses such as Dressmaking, &c.,) and 22 Bake-houses. The Sanitary condition of all the above is good. Very little home-work is done, lists including the names of only 10 people having been sent in during the year. They were all employed in the making of wearing apparel; the houses in which the work was carried on were found in a satisfactory condition.

During some years a certain amount of imported labour is employed for pea-picking, during the months of June and July. Very little accommodation is provided for the pea-pickers who find shelter in the barns and out-buildings of the farms on which they are employed, and no sanitary conveniences are provided.

The Infectious Disease (notification) Act is in force in the District, and in addition to the scheduled diseases the Council have at various times added Chicken-pox, Measles, Ophthalmia Neonatorum, Cerebro-spinal meningitis and Acute Poliomyelitis to the list.

Infectious Diseases. The number of notifications received was 202, Made up as follows:—Measles, 140; Scarlet Fever, 47; Erysipelas, 4; Diphtheria, 6; Puerperal Fever, 2; Chicken Pox, 2; Enteric Fever, 1. The deaths amongst the above were Scarlet Fever, 1; Measles, 1; Puerperal Fever, 1.

At the beginning of the year Measles was very prevalent and cases continued to be reported until the beginning of April. During the first week in September, Scarlet Fever began in North Newton, and in November cases made their appearance in North Petherton. The total number of cases in the two villages being 39. North Newton contributing 28 and North Petherton 11. These cases appeared to be due to personal contact or the presence of undetected cases.

There is no Isolation Hospital available for cases of Infectious Disease—so all the above cases had to be treated at home, and in several houses other members of the family developed the disease several days after the first case.

Tuberculosis. 25 cases were notified during the year, of these 22 were Pulmonary, and 3 other forms. The supervision of these cases is in the hands of the Tuberculosis Officer appointed by the County Council and they are also regularly visited by the health visitor. In case of death or removal of a case the rooms and blankets are thoroughly sprayed with a 1 in 50 solution of Izal.

The Council have made arrangements by which Antidiphtheritic Serum is supplied free of cost to the poorer inhabitants, and all the medical men in the district are supplied with order forms for this purpose.

With regard to Ophthalmia Neonatorum, the Medical Officer of Health has been instructed to engage the services of a trained Nurse to attend to any cases of this disease should he consider such services are necessary.

There is no steam disinfecter in the district so disinfection is limited to fumigation and spraying. Some means of dealing more effectively with clothing and bedding is urgently needed.

From the 7 chief Epidemic diseases 5 deaths were registered as against 5 in 1912, representing a death rate of .27 per thousand of the population.

Regarding the vital statistics, 222 deaths occurred, as against 235 in 1912 representing an annual mortality rate of 12·19 as against 12·91 the previous year. Of these 222 deaths 97 occurred in people aged 65 years and upwards, and 29 were in children under one year of age.

In the Western Division 94 deaths occurred. In the Eastern Division 102 and 26 in institutions outside the district.

Of the several causes of death, 14 resulted from Phthisis; 30 from Pneumonia and Bronchitis; 11 from Injuries; 23 from Heart Disease; 14 from Cancer and 1 Suicide.

The Infant Mortality was 73·60 per thousand births.

The crude birth rate during the year was 21·64

When corrected for age and sex distribution 26·70

The net death rate during the year was 12·19

When corrected for age and sex distribution 10·24

The **Bridgwater Rural District** is divided into 4 Registration Districts, viz :—The North Petherton District; The Middlezoy District; The Huntspill District; and the Bridgwater (Without) and Cannington District.

Below are given particulars of the population, birth rate and death rate of each of these Districts, together with the number of cases of infectious disease occurring, and the villages in which they occurred.

NORTH PETHERTON DISTRICT.

Population, 6,274.

	1912.	1913.
Birth Rate ..	22·47	17·53
Death Rate ...	14·02	8·92

Infectious Diseases notified :—

North Petherton. Scarlet Fever, 11. Erysipelas, 2.
Measles, 5. Chicken Pox, 2. Tuberculosis, 7.

Diphtheria, 3.

North Newton. Scarlet Fever, 28.

Spaxton. Diphtheria, 1.

Broomfield. Tuberculosis, 1.

St. Michæl Church. Erysipelas, 1.

Charlynch. Measles, 1.

MIDDLEZOY DISTRICT.

Population, 1,892.

	1912.	1913.
Birth Rate ...	17·97	17·97
Death Rate ...	9·51	17·44

Infectious Diseases notified :—

Westonzoyland. Measles, 18. Diphtheria, 1. Tuberculosis, 1.

Middlezoy. Measles, 1.

Othery. Measles, 5. Diphtheria, 1. Tuberculosis, 1.

Lyng. Erysipelas, 1.

HUNTSPILL DISTRICT.

Population, 6,380.

		1912.	1913.
Birth Rate	...	18·34	22·26
Death Rate	...	13·78	10·81

Infectious Diseases notified :—

Ashcott. Scarlet Fever, 4. Measles, 2.

Huntspill. Measles, 2. Tuberculosis, 2.

Pawlett. Measles, 1.

Chilton Polden and Burtley. Scarlet Fever, 2.

Catcott. Tuberculosis, 1.

Chedzoy. Tuberculosis, 1.

Edington. Tuberculosis, 1.

Woolavington. Measles, 1. Enteric Fever, 1.

Bawdrip. Measles, 17.

Puriton. Measles, 12.

Shapwick. Measles, 4.

Moorlynch. Measles, 6.

**BRIDGWATER (WITHOUT)
AND CANNINGTON DISTRICT.**

Population, 3,647.

		1912.	1913.
Birth Rate	...	15·08	27·42
Death Rate	...	10·97	10·42

Infectious Diseases notified :—

Bridgwater (Without). Measles, 8. Scarlet Fever, 1. Tuberculosis, 2.

Cannington. Measles, 25. Tuberculosis, 4.

Wembdon. Measles, 22. Tuberculosis, 2.

Durleigh. Measles, 3. Tuberculosis, 1.

Chilton Trinity. Measles, 6. Tuberculosis, 1. Scarlet Fever, 1.

Otterhampton. Measles, 1. Puerperal Fever, 2.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WILBERFORCE THOMPSON.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

For the Year 1913.



Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I herewith present to you my Twelfth Annual Report upon the Sanitary condition of the Bridgwater Rural District, for the year ending December, 1913.

I have during 1913 made Inspections of the whole of the District from time to time and have had brought to my notice 439 complaints, all of which have had my best attention and all have been remedied. In necessary cases I have served Statutory Notices under the direction of the Council and the following are the nuisances which have been abated.

Statutory Notices served	...	...	55
Disinfecting Rooms after Fever and Phthisis			64
Water samples taken	..	..	63
Returned unfit	...	...	45
Returned as good	...	..	18
New Drains laid	...	...	27
Dangerous Buildings	...	...	5
Council's Drains in choked condition		...	43
Cesspools emptied and Drains choked		...	19
Foul Drains and W.C.'s cleaned out		...	21
Houses require Lime-whiting	...	...	10

Accumulation of Manure	...	...	11
Testing Drains	...	...	12
New W.C.'s Built	...	...	20
Pigs kept improperly	...	...	3
Schools disinfected	..	...	1
Private Samples of Water taken		...	2
Butchers Licenses granted	...	...	4
Knackers License granted	..	...	1
Ditches cleaned out	...	...	5
Cowsheds dirty	...	...	2
Overcrowding	...	...	2
Bakehouse dirty	...	...	1
Workshops inspected and reported by His Majesty's Inspector	...	...	5
Clothes and Bedding destroyed after Fever			1
Piling ditch at Nethermore drove 90 yards of Sheet piling			
3 Factories have been reported by His Majesty's Inspector as being out of Order remedied			
New Sewers laid by Council	...	...	2
One of which was laid at Chilton Polden and the other at Westonzoyland			

HOUSE AND TOWN PLANNING ACT.

House to House Inspections for 1913.

Houses Inspected	...	119
Number reported as unfit for Habitation	...	3
Number defective but not enough to report as unfit	...	67
Number without Sanitary defects	...	49
Number with defects remedied at end of 1913		42
Number still defective at end of 1913	...	25
Houses found in dirty condition remedied	...	11

Houses found damp remedied ...	...	5
Cottages badly ventllated remedied	...	2
Eaves. Gutters and fall pipes required	..	22
Bad Ceilings	...	2
Lime Whiting	...	5
Dangerous Buildings ..	...	4
Dangerous Walls	..	1
Clearing Drains	...	2
To fix a pail to W.C.'s	...	4
Bad Floors	...	2
Roofs in bad repair	...	2

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

RICHARD POPHAM.

TABLE 1.

Vital Statistics of the Whole District during 1913 and previous years.

Name of District—Bridgwater Rural District.

Year.	BIRTHS.			Total Deaths registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.				
	Population estimated to Middle of each year.	Un-corrected Number.	Number.	Rate.	Number.	Rate.	Of Non-resi- dents regis- tered in the District.	Of Residents not registered in the District.	Under one year		At all Ages.	
									Number.	Rate per 1000 births re- gistered.	Number.	Rate.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1908	18238		387	21.2	215	11.8		22	23	59.42	237	13.0
1909	18238		364	19.9	228	12.5		23	31	85.03	251	13.7
1910	18238		432	23.7	218	19.0		28	26	62.5	246	13.5
1911	18203		351	19.28	183	10.06		26	24	68.39	209	11.48
1912	18203	347	350	19.23	201	11.03	2	36	19	54.28	235	12.91
1913	18203	387	394	21.64	199	10.93	3	26	29	73.60	222	12.20

Area of District in acres
(land) and inland } 85,076
water)

Total population at all ages 18,203
Number of inhabited houses 4,373
Average number of persons per house 4.16

At
Census
1911

TABLE II.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1913, In the Bridgwater Rural District.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in the whole District.							Total cases notified in each Locality			
	At Ages.							North Petherton District.	Middlesey District.	Huntspill District.	Bridgwater (Without) and Cannington District
	At all Ages.	Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 45.	45 to 65.				
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) ...	6		1	2	1	2		4	2		
Erysipelas ...	4	1				1	2	3	1		
Scarlet Fever ...	47		13	26	5	3		39		6	2
Enteric Fever ...	1			1						1	
Puerperal Fever ...	2					2					2
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	22			2	9	8	3	7	2	5	2
Other forms of Tuberculosis ...	3			1	2			1			2
Measles ...	140	4	26	91	10	8	1	6	24	45	65
Chicken Pox ...	2	1			1			2			
TOTALS ...	227	6	40	123	28	24	6	62	29	57	79

TABLE III.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the Year 1913.
Name of District—Bridgwater Rural District.

CAUSES OF DEATH.										Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of Residents whether occurring within or without the District.									
										All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 2.	2 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 45.	45 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	
All Causes { Certified Uncertified										218 4	27 2	3	3	2	12	20	55 1	96 1	
Measles										1			1						
Scarlet Fever										1			1						
Whooping Cough										2	2						1	6	
Influenza										7									
Erysipelas										14					2	6	6		
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)										4					3	1	5	9	
Other Tuberculous Diseases										14					1	3	9	10	
Cancer, malignant disease										23						1	1	12	
Organic Heart Disease										15	1	1		2		2	6	2	
Bronchitis										15									
Pneumonia (all forms)										15	2								
Diarrhoea and Enteritis										1	1						1		
Cirrhosis of Liver										1						1	6		
Nephritis and Bright's Disease										8		1				1			
Puerperal Fever										1						1			
Other Accidents and Diseases of Pregnancy and Parturition										17	17								
Congenital Debility & Malformation including Premature Birth										11		1				2	3	2	
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicides										1						1	1		
Suicides										85	6		1		3	1	18	56	
Other Defined Diseases																			
ALL CAUSES										222	29	3	3	2	12	20	56	97	

TABLE IV.

Name of District--Bridgwater Rural District.
Infantile Mortality during the Year 1913.
Deaths from stated Causes at various Ages under
One Year of age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.						Under 1 Week	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-3 Months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 year.
All Causes.	{	Certified	...	...	...	13	1			14	6		3	4	27
	{	Uncertified	...	...	...	1				1		1			2
Small-pox															
Chicken-pox															
Measles															
Scarlet Fever															
Whooping Cough											1			1	2
Diphtheria and Croup															
Erysipelas															
Tuberculous Meningitis															
Abdominal Tuberculous															
Other Tuberculous Diseases															
Meningitis (<i>not Tuberculous</i>)															
Convulsions							2			2			1	1	4
Laryngitis											1				1
Bronchitis															1
Pneumonia (all forms)														2	2
Diarrhoea											1				1
Enteritis,															
Gastritis															
Syphilis															
Rickets															
Suffocation, overlaying															
Injury at Birth															
Atelectasis															
Congenital Malformations															
Premature Birth							11	1		12					12
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus											3	1	1		5
Other Causes							1			1			1		2
						14	1			15	6	1	3	4	29

Births in the Year { Legt., 380. Deaths in the Year of { Legt. Infants, 28.
 { Illegt., 14. { Illegt. Infants, 1.

Births in the Bridgwater Rural District during the
Four Quarters of the Year 1913

	1st. Qr.	2nd. Qr.	3rd. Qr.	4th. Qr.	TOTAL.
North Petherton District ...	19	41	27	23	110
Middlezoy District ...	12	10	5	7	34
Hantspill District ..	37	31	38	37	143
Bridgwater (Without) and Cannington District }	17	16	10	57	100
Rate per 1000 1912—1906					
Ditto 1913—21·26					387